

## ON THE COMMON FORMAT OF EVENTIVES AND TOO-COMPARATIVES\*

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### Abstract

Should events be conceived of as primitive or should they be decomposed into more basic elements with certain syntax? This talk presents new evidence for the latter view: If events are represented as contradictory propositional meanings representing their pre- and post states, a uniform analysis of certain eventive and certain *too-* comparative constructions is possible; this is wanted given striking parallels between the two types of structure. The analysis goes some way, among other, toward explaining ‘repetitive/restitutive’ asymmetries familiar from eventive constructions (von Stechow 1996) but similarly arising in *too-* comparative constructions.

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Events as primitives or as pre- and post states

The assumption of Davidsonian variables makes for a simple representation of the logical form of natural language sentences encoding events. Accepting quantification over events, a sentence like *Otto flew a spaceship to Mars* can be translated into a logical form as in (1):

- (1)  $\exists e \ \& \text{fight}(e) \ \& \text{with-spaceship}(e) \ \& \text{to-Mars}(e) \ \& \text{PAST}(e)$

The format in (1) immediately tells us what entailments the sentence as a whole gives rise to – (1) simply entails the conjuncts it is made up of. If there are event variables, the ease with which we appear to talk about events as well as refer to them with anaphora is no mystery, and so on (see, e.g., Casati and Varzi 1996).

This paper does not develop alternative means to arrive at the virtues connected to the assumption of event variables just mentioned (but see e.g. Condoravdi and Beaver 2004). Its purpose is to add evidence to the view that events are not primitive but have a certain decomposable structure, similar to what has been proposed by authors like von Wright 1965 or Dowty 1979. According to these authors, events are really composed of states connected by operators. Abstracting from detail, *Otto flew a spaceship to Mars* looks as in (2) on the compositional approach:

- (2)  $\exists t, t' \neg \text{AT}(\text{Mars}, \text{Otto}, \text{spaceship}, t) \ \& \ \text{AT}(\text{Mars}, \text{Otto}, \text{spaceship}, t') \ \& \ t' > t$

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A famous argument that the representation of events should be as in (2) and not as in (1) comes from patterns with the presupposition triggering adverb *again*. In eventive predications, *again* may trigger a presupposition that the event as a whole occurred before or that merely the ‘resultant state’ held before. These are the repetitive and restitutive readings respectively that *again* may give rise to, cf. (3) (presuppositional meanings are written in spaced type where this enhances readability). Note the ‘certain’ below (3-b) – it is the same door talked about in the assertion that figures in the presupposition triggered by *wieder* under the restitutive reading:<sup>1</sup>

- (3) Otto closed a door again
- a. there was an earlier door-closing repetitive
  - b. there was a certain closed door earlier restitutive

The reading that *again* gives rise to is syntactically conditioned, as can be seen with its German counterpart *wieder*. If *wieder* occurs to the left of the direct object in an agentive structure, only a repetitive reading is available. If it occurs to the right of the direct object, it naturally triggers a restitutive reading as well (the repetitive reading being hardly available in this particular case).

- (4) a. Otto hat wieder eine Tür geschlossen  
 Otto has again a door closed  
 there was an earlier door-closing repetitive
- b. Otto hat eine Tür wieder geschlossen  
 Otto has a door again closed  
 there was a certain closed door earlier restitutive

Von Stechow 1996 offers an analysis of the pattern just illustrated. According to it, the presupposition that *wieder* triggers is computed on the basis of its c-command domain; in structures like (4-a), *wieder* has in its scope the structure encoding both the pre- and the post state of the event in question; in structures like (4-b), it has in its scope only the structure encoding the event’s post state.

The Davidsonian approach to event representation has nothing to say about the repetitive/restitutive pattern, simply because it does not represent pre- and post states separately – there are only events as a whole on the Davidsonian approach.

## 1.2 Argument and Plan

### 1.2.1 *too-comparatives*

Comparison involves looking at different things or states of affairs. In the case of *too-comparatives*, the two things or states of affairs cannot be part of the same situation.<sup>2</sup> Consider an example:

- (5) Otto found the water too warm.

<sup>1</sup>It seems to be possible for quantifiers, therefore, to bind variables occurring in presuppositions. Cf. Brandt (to appear) for some discussion of related issues.

<sup>2</sup>We use the term *too-comparative* also for constructions involving *(not) ... enough*.

Interpreting (5) involves looking at a non-actual situation; roughly, (5) conveys that the water is warm to a degree *d* that is above (or below, if we use *not...enough*) a degree *d'* such that if the water were warm to degree *d'*, it would be appropriate for Otto's purposes (cf. von Stechow 1984 and Meier 2003 on the counterfactuality of *too*-comparatives). For *too*-comparatives, it is obvious that their interpretation involves reference to incompatible situations (e.g., something cannot be both acceptably warm and too warm at the same time).

If it can be shown that the structure of *too*-comparative constructions is like that of eventive constructions, the decompositional approach to event representation is supported. The decompositional approach says that the linguistically relevant representation of events is in terms of pre- and post-states holding at different times. This is just the obvious format for the representation of *too*-comparatives, widening the concept of times to indices (situations/'worlds') at which certain states of affairs hold and abstracting from the unidirectionality of time.

### 1.2.2 Constructions and scope of *again*

The point of the paper is to argue that repetitive/restitutive asymmetries familiar from eventive constructions arise in a parallel fashion in *too*-comparative structures. Consider (6) and (7), exemplifying the 'dative experiencer construction' that will be the focus of investigation here and illustrating the kind of asymmetry we are interested in:

- (6) a. ...weil wieder einem Warlord Millionen in die Finger kamen  
       ...because again a warlord-DAT millions in the fingers came  
       b. ...weil einem Warlord Millionen wieder in die Finger kamen  
       ...because a warlord millions again in the fingers came  
       '...because a warlord got hold of millions again'
- (7) a. ...weil wieder einem das Wasser zu warm war  
       ...because again someone-DAT the water too warm was  
       b. ...weil einem wieder das Wasser zu warm war  
       ...because someone-DAT again the water too warm was  
       'because someone found the water too warm again'

Considering first the eventive case in (6), the intuitive difference between (6-a) and (6-b) is this: for (6-a) to be felicitous, a presupposition has to hold that an event of a warlord getting hold of millions occurred before. There has to be a warlord that went from poor to rich at an earlier time. For (6-b), in contrast, it is enough if there is an earlier time at which a warlord had millions – the warlord in question could have been born rich, for example. In structures like (6-b), only the post state of an event of a warlord getting hold of millions is presupposed.

We argue that the contrast between (7-a) and (7-b) is parallel. At this point, the difference can be described as follows: for (7-a) to be felicitous, there has to have been someone at an earlier time whose standard regarding water temperature (and some purpose) was exceeded by the actual water temperature. This individual can be different from the one involved in the actually asserted meaning. For (7-b), in contrast, the prominent reading

is that there is an individual whose standard is such that it was exceeded by the water temperature at an earlier time and is exceeded by the water temperature at a later time (the ‘assertion time’) as well. In (7-a), *wieder* takes scope over the standard of the individual in question as well as over the degree to which the individual actually experiences the water temperature. In (7-b), in contrast, the individual talked about in the presupposition and assertion appears to remain constant (but cf. section 4 below for qualification): there is an individual with a certain standard regarding water temperature (and some purpose), and this standard is exceeded at an earlier as well as at a later time.

Just as *wieder* in eventive constructions may take scope over pre- and post states or just post states, it may take scope over standards and actual degree instantiations or just over actual degree instantiations in *too*- comparative structures. This is expected if at the relevant level of representation, pre-states in eventive constructions correspond to standards in comparative constructions, and post-states correspond to actual degree instantiations.

### 1.2.3 Overview

The structure of the paper is as follows: section 2 presents the constructions that will be the empirical focus of investigation and briefly summarizes the main aspects of their analysis developed elsewhere (Brandt 2003, to appear). Section 3 introduces a simple representational format that will be suitable for the purpose here. The format is developed with simple (but non-transparent) comparative constructions for illustrative purposes, it is then shown how it applies to the productively occurring (and more transparent) *too*-comparative and eventive constructions in focus. Section 4 comprises the analysis of repetitive/restitutive asymmetries in both types of construction. Section 5 concludes.

## 2 Background

I have argued earlier that there is a particular ‘cipient predication’ structure that is shared by a range of productively occurring constructions typically featuring dative arguments in German (Brandt 2003, to appear).<sup>3</sup> For the purposes of this paper, I will focus on constructions as given in (8).

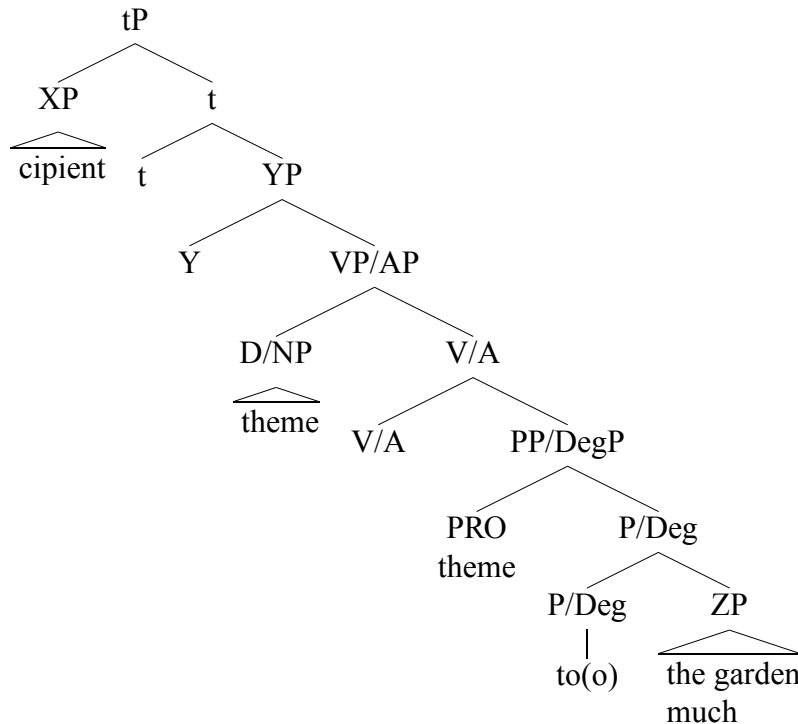
- (8) a. Otto ist die Suppe \*(zu) salzig  
 Otto-DAT is the soup-NOM (too) salty  
 ‘Otto finds the soup too hot’  
 b. Otto ist die Suppe \*(zu Boden) gefallen  
 Otto-DAT is the soup-NOM (to ground) fallen  
 ‘The soup fell to the ground to Otto’s misfortune’

Example (8-a) illustrates the *too*- comparative construction, (8-b) illustrates the eventive construction. I will not review here in any detail the arguments leading to the view that (8-a) and (8-b) indeed share a common structure. At core, the constructions share a dative subject (‘cipient’) with analogous properties; they further comprise a theme and a (degree) location argument, presence of the latter being a necessary condition for the licensing of

<sup>3</sup>See the summary and review of my dissertation that appeared in GLOT 7:9/10 for quick reference.

the dative subject, as the examples already indicate. The structure I have argued to underly both (8-a) and (8-b) is given in (9).

(9)



The main idea behind (9) is that cipient datives are licensed as subjects of particular predicates. The core properties of the predication structure are the following:

- the VP/AP encodes a propositional ‘thingatloc’ meaning, corresponding to there being something at a certain location
- a presupposition is projected from the VP/AP predicate that corresponds just to the negation of thingatloc
- the category ‘little t’ establishes a predication relation between the predicate and the dative cipient subject – it abstracts over a variable for the cipient to bind (a super-location of the (degree) location argument) and existentially closes the thingatloc meaning
- the dative cipient argument accommodates (‘binds’) the presuppositional meaning projected from the predicate.<sup>4</sup>

A feature of the analysis that is important here is that the (degree) location argument is definite with respect to the cipient, acting as the subject of predication. This is most obvious in the case of the *too*-comparative structure, consider (10-a) vs. (10-b):

- (10) a. Die Suppe ist zu salzig  
the soup is too salty

<sup>4</sup>Merger of the cipient argument therefore leads to a fully interpretable structure. Combined with Chomsky’s 1999 proposal that structure that can be interpreted must not be kept in syntax, this gives a basic explanation of why the theme argument situated in VP/AP cannot enter local syntactic relations (the traditional ‘A-relations’) with material situated above the cipient. Cf. the references cited.

- b. Die Suppe ist dem Otto zu salzig  
 the soup is the Otto-DAT too salty  
 ‘Otto found the soup too salty’

Interpreting (10-a) involves comparing the actual degree to which saltiness is experienced to a standard that comes with the utterance situation: the actual degree of saltiness is above a certain degree (range) defining appropriate saltiness (regarding soup and some purpose) – it is the speaker or a group comprising the speaker that defines what the appropriate degree is. In (10-b), in contrast, it is the cipient referent that defines appropriate saltiness – the standard needed to interpret the *too*-comparative comes with the cipient referent. Similarly (but harder to pin down) in the eventive construction:

- (11) a. Die Suppe fiel zu boden  
 the soup fell to ground  
 ‘the soup fell to the ground’  
 b. Die Suppe fiel dem Otto zu boden  
 the soup fell the Otto-DAT to ground  
 ‘the soup fell to the ground to Otto’s misfortune’

The location at which the soup ends up in (11-a) is defined with respect to some location set in the utterance context; it could be the location of an aforementioned agent or container but also e.g. the location of the speaker. In (11-b), it is the cipient that sets the location with respect to which the location at which the soup ends up is defined; in the usual case (abstracting from telekinesis and the like), it will be a location on the cipient referent’s vertical axis.

It is crucial for the discussion to follow that the meaning amounting to the actual (degree) location of the theme is encoded below the cipient, in fact below the theme that binds a PRO element in the PP/DegP respectively; therefore, the PP/DegP already comprises all the variables involved in the ‘thingatloc’ meaning.

The negated thingatloc meaning, projected from the predicate, is available only at the stage where the cipient is merged – it is the cipient that anchors (or binds) the negated thingatloc meaning (cf. section 3.2 for elaboration).

It is, in sum, the part of structure comprising the cipient that encodes the complete event (a change from ‘not: theme at location’ to ‘theme at location’) and the comparison as a whole respectively (‘not: theme at (degree-) location’ to ‘theme at (degree-) location’).

### 3 Representation

#### 3.1 *Wieder*

Taking events to be made up from pre- and post-states, the repetitive and restitutive readings associated with *wieder* can be represented as follows:<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Less perspicuously but more explicitly, the repetitive and restitutive readings respectively look as follows:

- (i) a.  $\exists t, t', t'', t''' \neg p(t''') \ \& \ p(t'') \ \& \ t''' < t'' \ \& \ t''', t'' \subset ET \ \& \ \neg p(t') \ \& \ p(t) \ \& \ t' < t \ \& \ t', t \subset LT$

(12) wieder/again:

- a. ET:  $\neg p(t'') \& p(t') \& t'' < t' \& \text{LT: } \neg p(t') \& p(t) \& t' < t$  repetitive
- b. ET:  $p(t'') \& \text{LT: } \neg p(t') \& p(t) \& t' < t$  restitutive

If *wieder* applies to a structure encoding a complete event, it triggers a presupposition that at an earlier time, a change from a state of not *p* to a state *p* occurred. If it applies to a structure just encoding the post-state of an event, it triggers a presupposition that at an earlier time, the post state of the event held.

### 3.2 Too- comparatives

If I say *Mir ist schlecht* (Me-DAT is sick, ‘I feel sick’), I assert that the degree of sickness that I experience is above some standard of well-being, call it ‘sickness standard’. Taking *d*’ to be the degree to which I actually experience sickness and *d* my sickness standard, we have:

(13)  $\exists d', d_{\text{standard}} d' > d_{\text{standard}}$

If I say *Mir ist wieder schlecht* (‘I feel sick again’), I assert the above and commit myself that there was an earlier time where I felt sick as well. A short way of writing this is (14):

(14) ET:  $\exists d', d_{\text{standard}} \& d' > d_{\text{standard}} \& \text{LT: } \exists d', d_{\text{standard}} d' > d_{\text{standard}}$

Standards determining what is appropriate with regard to some property, thing instantiating that property (and purpose in question) are different for different individuals; however, we do not take standards as associated with particular individuals to change at unreasonable rates. Our expectations are that standards that individuals have are stable. Therefore, (14) can be written as follows under normal circumstances:

(15)  $\exists d_{\text{standard}} \& \text{ET: } \exists d d > d_{\text{standard}} \& \text{LT: } \exists d' d' > d_{\text{standard}}$

There are a range of superficially simple predicates licensing dative cipients in German (and similarly in a variety of languages); these predicates usually speak about bodily and/or sense experience (being *sick*, being *hot/cold*, *tasty*, (*un*)*pleasant*)

Arbitrary scalar predicates productively license the construction under investigation to the extent that a degree element like *too* or (*not...*) *enough* is involved – the degree element makes it explicit that we are talking about exceeding (or not reaching) individuals’ standards with respect to some thing, property and purpose. As far as the semantics is concerned, I assume that nothing changes. Thus a *too*- comparative like *the water was too warm* has truth conditions as sketched in (16):<sup>6</sup>

(16) The water was too warm

$\exists d_{\text{standard}}, d' \& \text{AT}(\text{water}, d_{\text{standard}}, i) \& \text{AT}(\text{water}, d, i') \& d > d_{\text{standard}} \& i > i'$

b.  $\exists t, t', t'' p(t'') \& t'' \subset \text{ET} \& \neg p(t') \& p(t) \& t' < t \& t', t \subset \text{LT}$

<sup>6</sup>We now write *i* for ‘index’ instead of *t* for ‘time’ as in the eventive case. The ordering can be taken to correspond to preferability.

There are duals in the domain of comparison; all of the following express that the actual degree of warmth diverges from what we call the standard:

- (17) a. the water was too warm  
b. the water was not cold enough  
c. the water was too cold  
d. the water was not cold enough

All of (17) license the cipient construction; it does not matter whether the actual degree exceeds the standard or vice versa. The condition relevant for cipient licensing is simply that the standard and the actual degree diverge. More generally, we can therefore write the portion of meaning mattering for cipient licensing as two contradictory meanings, one corresponding to the standard and one to the actual instantiation:

- (18)  $d_{standard}: \neg AT(x, d, i)$   
 $d_{actual}: AT(x, d, i')$

The cipient defines the range of degrees of potential property instantiation, the degrees to which the pertaining individual can experience the instantiation of some property (its ‘quality space’ (Quine 1960)); in particular, the cipient determines the standard with respect to which comparison takes place. For brevity, we write the individual that determines the degree range and standard as an index on the  $d$  variable. Reminding us that standards are more or less fixed over time for particular individuals, the interesting portion of meaning a sentence like *Dem Otto war das Wasser wieder zu warm* (‘Otto found the water too warm again’) translates into can be written as in (19):

- (19)  $\exists x \neg AT(water, d_x, i) \ \& \ ET: AT(water, d_x, i) \ \& \ LT: AT(water, d'_x, i)$

The eventive cases we are talking about are unaccusatives with location arguments. A sentence like *Dem Otto kamen Millionen in die Finger* (‘Otto got hold of millions’) translates into (20), where  $l$  ranges over locations (associated with the cipient, written again as an index on the location variable).

- (20)  $\exists x \neg AT(millions, l_x, i) \ \& \ AT(millions, l_x, i') \ \& \ i < i'$

Depending on whether *wieder* takes scope over both the pre- and the post-state or just the post state, we get (21-a) or (21-b) respectively:

- (21) a.  $\exists x ET: \neg AT(millions, l_x, i) \ \& \ AT(millions, l_x, i') \ \& \ i < i'$   
 $\ \& \ LT: \neg AT(millions, l_x, i'') \ \& \ AT(millions, l_x, i''') \ \& \ i'' < i'''$   
b.  $\exists x ET: AT(millions, l_x, i) \ \& \ LT: AT(millions, l_x, i')$

### 3.3 A note on presupposition, *wieder* and negation

Under the analysis presented here, the different readings that *wieder* gives rise to depend on whether or not it has in its scope the dative cipient argument that accommodates the negated thingatloc meaning, projected from the VP/AP as a presupposition.



That *wieder* may indeed take scope over meanings that have themselves presuppositional status can be seen in the following examples featuring the aspectual verb *anfangen* ('start'):

- (22) Er hat wieder angefangen seine Frau zu schlagen  
 he has again started his wife to beat  
 'He started beating his wife again'
- a. ET: he went from not beating his wife to beating his wife & LT: he went from not beating to beating his wife  
 b. ET: he beat his wife & LT: he went from not beating his wife to beating his wife

Aspectual verbs like *start* or *stop* presuppose that what is started or stopped has not been (*start*) or has been (*stop*) the case before. *Wieder* may trigger a reading according to which there was an earlier starting or stopping (going from  $p$  to  $\neg p$  or v.v.) or just a reading according to which what is started or stopped was (not) the case before. Interestingly, negation appears to help to get the 'narrow' reading:

- (23) Er hat nicht wieder angefangen seine Frau zu schlagen  
 He has not again started his wife to beat
- a. ET: he beat his wife. LT: he did not go from not beating his wife to beating his wife

The 'repeated starting' reading does not appear to be excluded in (23); however, the natural reading that (23) has is the one according to which the action that was started was in process at an earlier time.

It is well known that negation creates islands, e.g. for the scope of existential quantifiers that are otherwise amazingly free as respects scope taking (cf. Reinhart 1997). Negation appears to have a scope-trapping effect on *wieder* as well.

#### 4 Repetitive/Restitutive asymmetries

In section 3 above, a simple format for representation of the readings that *wieder* gives rise to was developed. Still earlier in section 2, the cipient structure was sketched, the immediately relevant point being that the actually asserted thingatloc meaning (loc standing for locations as well as degrees) is encoded in the VP/AP while the negated thingatloc meaning corresponding to the pre-state and standard respectively is associated with the cipient argument.

This section is devoted to showing that repetitive/restitutive readings with *wieder* arise in the eventive and comparative structure in an analogous fashion. A problem is that while post states are independent portions of meaning (they are just states), this is not so for the portion of meaning encoding actual property instantiation in the *too*-comparative structure. *Too*-comparatives always have to be interpreted with respect to a standard; special means are necessary therefore to bring out the scope asymmetry in the *too*-comparative structure.

## 4.1 Eventives

Consider again the repetitive/restitutive pattern in the eventive case:

- (24) a. ...weil wieder einem Warlord Millionen in die Finger kamen  
           ...because again a warlord millions in the fingers came  
       b. ...weil einem Warlord Millionen wieder in die Finger kamen  
           ...because a warlord millions again in the fingers came  
           ‘...because a warlord got hold of millions again’

For (24-a) to be felicitous, there must have been an earlier event of a warlord getting hold of millions. For (24-b) to be felicitous, it suffices if a certain warlord had millions before. The truth/felicity conditions for (24-b) are given in (25):

- (25)  $\exists x (\text{warlord}(x)) \ \& \ \text{ET: AT}(\text{millions}, \text{loc}_x, i') \ \& \ \text{LT: } \neg \text{AT}(\text{millions}, \text{loc}_x, i) \ \& \ \text{AT}(\text{millions}, \text{loc}_x, i') \ \& \ i < i'$

In (25), the presupposition triggered by *wieder* is  $\text{ET: AT}(\text{millions}, \text{loc}_{\text{warlord}}, i')$ , the one triggered by the predicate is  $\neg \text{AT}(\text{millions}, \text{loc}_{\text{warlord}}, i)$ . Adding the latter presupposition to the presupposition triggered by *wieder* and furthermore quantifying over warlords separately at ET and LT, we have the representation of the repetitive reading.

While the first reading one gets for (24-b) is indeed the restitutive one, a repetitive reading appears available as well, especially if one plays with focus. Introducing negation helps to single out the restitutive reading, though, cf. (26):

- (26) ...weil keinem Warlord wieder Millionen in die Finger kamen  
           ...because no warlord millions again in the fingers came  
           ‘...because no warlord got hold of millions again’

The reading that (26) gives rise to is just as the one in (25), except that we have a negative existential quantifier now; there is no warlord such that he has millions after the event that had millions earlier. Negation appears to prevent *wieder* from taking scope over the cipient and hence from taking scope over the negated ‘thingatloc’ meaning corresponding to the pre-state that is accommodated/bound by the cipient.

## 4.2 Too- comparatives

It is helpful to consider the examples that follow within scenarios. Imagine that there is a friendly contest between the German and the Palestinian national swimming teams. The contest is held in Palestine/Israel for the second time, the teams are the same. Due to circumstances, the water in the Palestinian pool is warmer than the German swimmers are used to. The German coach has reason to be worried that this may be a disadvantage for his team.

Under the first scenario, one of the German swimmers fails at the second contest. The German coach comments apologetically:

- (27) a. Es war wieder einem Schwimmer das Wasser zu warm  
it was again a swimmer-DAT the water too warm  
b. Es war einem Schwimmer wieder das Wasser zu warm  
it was a swimmer again the water too warm  
‘A swimmer found the water too warm again’

Both comments presuppose that at the first contest, a swimmer failed as well; the difference between (27-a) and (27-b) is that there is a clear tendency to interpret (27-b) such that it was in fact one and the same swimmer that failed at both contests; again, however, intuitions become somewhat elusive after some consideration, especially if the focus structure is changed.

Under the second scenario, none of the German swimmers fails at the second contest. The German coach comments triumphantly:

- (28) a. Es war wieder keinem Schwimmer das Wasser zu warm  
it was again no swimmer-DAT the water too warm  
b. Es war keinem Schwimmer wieder das Wasser zu warm  
it was no swimmer again the water too warm  
‘No swimmer found the water too warm again’

The scope difference between (28-a) and (28-b) is clear: For (28-a) to be felicitous, it must have been the case at both contests that there was no swimmer that found the water too warm. In contrast, (28-b) is felicitous if at the first contest, there was in fact a swimmer that found the water too warm (and hence failed). Let us look how this comes about.

As in (27-a), *wieder* has wide scope with respect to the cipient argument in (28-a). Therefore, we get the reading sketched in (29):

- (29) ET:  $\neg \exists x (\text{swimmer}(x) \dots)$  & LT:  $\neg \exists x (\text{swimmer}(x) \dots)$

In (28-b), the cipient has wide scope with respect to *wieder*; negation traps *wieder* below the quantifier. *Wieder* therefore cannot take scope over the standard, itself a presupposition (the negated thing-at-loc meaning) that is represented at the level of the cipient argument. Since we are talking about one and the same individual, we can ‘pull out’ the propositional meaning defining the cipient’s standard, that is, give it wide scope with respect to both ET and LT (cf. discussion in section 3.2):

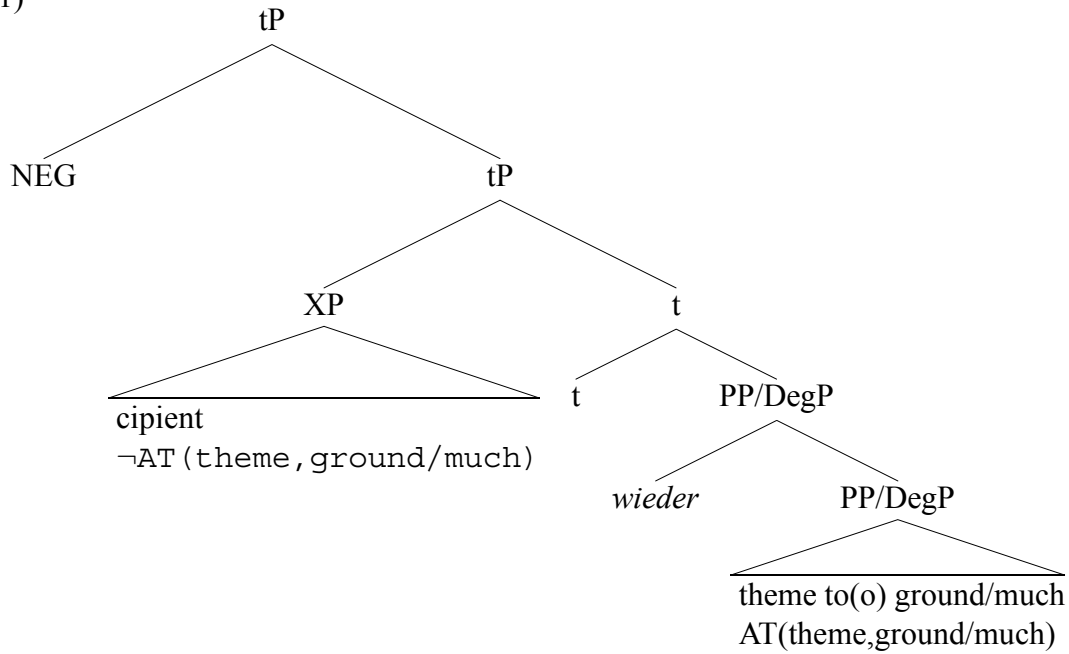
- (30)  $\neg \exists x (\text{schwimmer}(x)) \& \neg \text{AT}(\text{water}, \text{deg}_x, i)$  & ET:  $\text{AT}(\text{water}, \text{deg}_x, i)$   
& LT:  $\text{AT}(\text{water}, \text{deg}_x, i)$

The translation of (28-b) says that there is no individual with a certain standard as regards (acceptable) water temperature such that at an earlier (the presupposition) time and at a later (the assertion time), the actual degree to which water temperature was experienced exceeded the standard. (30) is however perfectly compatible with there being an individual that found the water too warm at an earlier time but not at a later time. In contrast to (28-a), (28-b) does not exclude this situation.

## 5 Summary

I have argued that an analysis of eventive and *too* comparative cipient constructions along the lines of (31) can account for ‘repetitive/restitutive ambiguities’ familiar from the eventive domain but similarly arising in *too*- comparative constructions:

(31)



In (31), the actually asserted meaning is encoded in the VP/AP; it says that there is something at a certain (degree) location, corresponding to the post state in the eventive case and to the actual degree instantiation in the comparative case. The pre-state (event) and standard (comparison) is represented at the level where the cipient is merged. If *wieder* is prevented from taking scope over the cipient, it triggers a presupposition only corresponding to the post-state and actual degree instantiation respectively. Negation as amalgamating with the cipient quantifier in German appears to create such an island for *wieder*. In eventive structures, post-states are essentially independent portions of meaning. The interpretation of *too*- comparative structures, in contrast, always involves reference to a standard. It is for this reason that repetitive/restitutive asymmetries are harder to detect in the latter case; it must be insured, in particular, that the cipient referent is the same in the presupposition triggered by *wieder* and in the asserted meaning. Negation achieves this and brings out the analogy.

More work is needed on distinguishing kinds of presuppositions and their interaction with syntactic structure. A core feature of the analysis employed here is that syntactically present argument expressions may act as accommodators/binders for presuppositions projected from predicates.

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